REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in the application. Claims 4, 5, 7 and 8 have been amended. Applicants request favorable reconsideration of the application.

Specification

Applicants have amended the abstract to contain 148 words. Applicants have also made changes to pages 5 and 11 of the specification. Applicants submit that the specification is in proper form.

35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph

The Office Action rejected claim 4 for containing an insufficient antecedent basis to support the phrases, "*the detection direction of distance detectors*" and "*each detection member.*" The Office Action contended these phrases could refer to any of the detectors; i.e. the *rotation angle detector,* the *distance detector* or the *contact swinging detection members.*

Claim 4 has been amended to further clarify the claim. Applicants submit that claim 4 is in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

The Office Action rejected claims 7 and 8 for referring to "detection members," which the Office Action considered to be indefinite. Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to further clarify the claims. Applicants submit that claims 7 and 8 are in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

On the Merits

The Office Action rejected claims 4-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Mutsuura et al.* (5,582,224). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent Claim 4:

Independent claim 4 requires in part:

> beam reflection scanners disposed at a plurality of desired positions along the axis of the log at appropriate intervals and near the periphery of the log that is supplied to the preliminary axis location, such that the detection direction [of the] distance detectors are oriented toward the axis of the preliminary axles.... Emphasis added.

The Office Action contends this requirement is disclosed by *Matsuura* in figure 19. Figure 19 does appear to disclose 3 detectors; detector of largest radius (104), detector of rotation angle (56) and detector of planar table position (V). However, these disclosures do not anticipate the "beam reflection scanner" as required by claim 1. None of the three mentioned detectors could fairly be considered a "beam reflection scanner."

Matsuura also discloses:

> a plurality of contact type detecting elements using rocking arms are used as periphery detectors. **Instead** of them, non-contact type periphery detectors 105 juxtaposed closely along the longitudinal direction of the log 1 can also be used as shown in FIG. 24. Such non-contact type detectors are, for example, those using the reflection by the outer surface of the log of propagating medium, such as laser beam, electromagnetic wave (such as infrared radiation or light from photoelectric cells), or ultra sonic wave, and so on (FIG 25). Emphasis added. Column 17, lines 31-40.

Independent claim 4 requires **both** "contact swinging detection members" and "beam reflection scanners." *Mutsuura* specifically teaches using non-contact detecting elements **instead** of the contact type detecting elements. Therefore, *Mutsuura* does not disclose or reasonably suggest what is required by independent claim 4.

Claims 5-8 depend from independent claim 4, and are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above.

Additionally, it is clear that in case where there are only the beam reflection scanners, it is possible to determine the optimum yield access because accurate contour data about the log can be obtained, as described in paragraph [0014]. However, the locations of the log that are actually measured are virtual points as compared with the size of the scanners. As a result, the contour data about the log as a whole along the axis thereof cannot be obtained even if such scanners are arranged along the axis of the log virtually without any gaps there between, making it impossible to determine the maximum radius of rotation of the log.

On the other hand, in case where there are only the contact-swinging detection members, it is possible to obtain contour data about the log as a whole along the axis thereof by arranging the contact-swinging detection members as shown in Fig, 15 of the US Patent US 5,582,224 (D1), with the result that the maximum radius of rotation of the log can be determined. However, as described in paragraph [0015], the detection members are not capable of easily and faithfully following the concave or convex portions of the log, making it difficult to determine an appropriate optimum yield axis.

Therefore, it is an object of the application to provide an apparatus for centering a log not showing these disadvantages.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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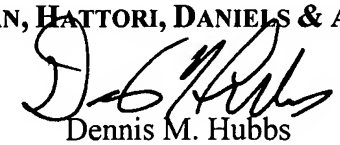

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